

# **BIB FOR HOLDING DETACHABLE INFANT TOYS**

## **BACKGROUND OF INVENTION**

Infants are prone to dropping toys, teething rings, pacifiers and other devices on the ground or surrounding area. Retrieving these devices can become a particularly annoying task when the infant is in a high chair. These devices have to be constantly picked up and then should be cleaned before the child can resume playing with or mouthing the devices. What is needed is a convenient technique for keeping these devices within reach.

## **SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION**

This invention reduces the unnecessary, repetitive dropping or throwing of toys or teething devices down by an infant. This invention helps protect the infant from unsanitary play or teething. By attaching or affixing toys or teething devices to loops on a bib worn by the infant, play articles remain within easy reach of the infant while wearing the bib of the invention.

Further advantages are that the toys or teething articles can be removed from the loops, and the teething rings/toy devices can be linked together in a chain, which allows teething devices to be able to be brought to the mouth, while still remaining secured to the bib.

## **BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS**

The present invention is illustrated by way of example and not limitation in the accompanying figures, in which like references indicate similar elements, and in which:

FIG. 1 shows a front view of a bib, in accordance with an embodiment of the invention; and

FIG. 2 shows a back view of a bib, in accordance with an embodiment of the invention.

Skilled artisans will appreciate that elements in the figures are illustrated for simplicity and clarity and have not necessarily been drawn to scale.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Before describing in detail the particular bib in accordance with the present invention, it should be observed that the present invention resides primarily in combinations of method steps and apparatus components related to bibs. Accordingly, the apparatus components and method steps have been represented where appropriate by conventional symbols in the drawings, showing only those specific details that are pertinent to understanding the present invention so as not to obscure the disclosure.

Referring to FIGS. 1 and 2, front and back views of a bib 100 are shown , respectively, in accordance with an embodiment of the invention. The bib comprises a bib body 105, a means 110 for attaching the bib to the infant's torso, a means 112 for attaching the bib to the infant's neck and a plurality of loops 120 (five are shown in FIG. 1). The bib may comprise one or more detachable infant toys 140 as described in more detail below. The bib body 105 has a top 125 that is the neck opening, and a bottom 130 that is the portion that goes near the waist of the infant. In this description, the term "infant" encompasses all young people who would wear a bib, such as those referred to as babies, infants or toddlers. The bib body 105 can be made from durable, flexible material, such a plastic or suitable cloth material and is typically cleanable by washing or wiping. The means 112 for attaching the bib body to the infants neck may be by any suitable means, such as tying, snapping, buttoning, or the use of a hook and loop closure system, and is preferably adjustable for a variety of neck sizes of babies, infants and toddlers. The means 110 for attaching the bib body around the infants torso may be by any suitable means, such as tying, snapping, buttons or a hook and loop closure system and is preferably adjustable for a variety of torso sizes of babies, infants and toddlers.

Referring again to FIG. 1, five loops 120 are made from a durable, flexible material such as string, fabric, plastic, cording, lace or rope. The loops 120 are preferably attached to the bib 100 by placing the two ends of the durable, flexible material together

and securing them to the bib 100 by sewing, with the loop fold 121 (the place in the loop opposite the two ends where the fold occurs) towards the top 125 of the bib body 105. The material of the loops 120 and the stitches 123 added by sewing are selected to be strong enough and secured well enough to the bib body 105 to withstand (i.e., not become detached or broken) during normal attachment and detachment of the detachable devices 140 to the loops by older persons, to withstand an infant playing with the secured toys while attached to the loops 120, and to withstand normal cleaning of the bib 100.

The two ends may be placed together on top of each other, partially on top of each other, or next to each other. Each of these loop end attachment arrangements in this document is called attaching the loop ends adjacent to each other. The loop 120 is then folded over the already attached portion of the loop, so that the loop fold 122 is oriented towards the bottom 130 of the bib body 105 (i.e, nearer the bottom 130 than are the attached ends). The folded over section may be further secured by sewing the folded layers of the loop material adjacent to (i.e., on top of or next to) the two attached loop ends, for extra security and durability, either by adding more stitches to the stitches 123 or by sewing the two ends and folded over portions at the same time with the stitches 123. Other loop attachment means (not shown in FIG. 1) may include attachment by means of a snap, button, tacking riveting, or an appropriate adhesive. The loop material may have a cross sectional dimension of about 1/4 inch (0.64 centimeters.), but it may range from a size that is not too small to cause cuts or pain for infants (e.g., on the order of 1/8 inch or 0.32 cm) to a size that is not so big as to make attachment of the detachable devices difficult (about 1/2 inch, or about 1.25 cm.). The loops have a loop size 150 shown in FIG. 1 that in this embodiment (of folded over loops) is the distance from the stitches 123 (or other means of attachment) to the loop end 122. The loop size 150 may be within a wide range. The minimum size is limited by such considerations as a need for easy attachment of the detachable devices 120 and a need to make the detachable devices convenient for the infant to play with. The maximum size is limited by such considerations as trying to avoid entanglement of multiple loops 120. The loops in the example shown in FIG. 1 are about 2 inches (5 cm) long, and typical loop sizes could range from about 1 inch (2.5 cm) to about 10 inches (25.4 cm).

Although five loops are shown in the embodiment illustrated in FIG. 1, it will be appreciated that other numbers of loops can be used. Other design features of the bib may influence the number of loops provided, from as little as one to many. For example, 20 small loops might be provided as an interesting design that also provides the advantages described herein.

In accordance with an alternative embodiment, a loop is formed by attaching the two ends of the loop material apart from each other. In an example, a 4 inch (10 cm) length of material has its ends attached 3 inches (7.5 cm) apart, the attachment sewing occupying  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch (1.25 cm) at each loop end, thereby leaving 3 inches (7.5 cm) (which is the loop size for this type of loop attachment) of unattached loop material spanning 2 inches (5 cm) of the bib, so that the loop curves up, down, or out from the bib 100 about one inch (2.5 cm.). This type of loop may be oriented horizontally, vertically or at any angle, and the loop cross section and loop size may have wide ranges.

In accordance with one embodiment, detachable infant toys 140 are included with the bib 100. The infant toys may be any detachable toy or device, such as the type designed for teething, or a rattle, a figure, etc. One type of detachable infant toy 140 is shown in FIG. 1, but any devices that are attachable and detachable such as by means of flexing or bending the devices may be included with or used with the bib 100. This allows the detachable infant toys to be removed for washing and allows several toy/teething devices to be linked together to form a chain which allows the child/infant place teething toys in the mouth.

In the foregoing specification, the invention and its benefits and advantages have been described with reference to specific embodiments. However, one of ordinary skill in the art appreciates that various modifications and changes can be made without departing from the scope of the present invention as set forth in the claims below. Accordingly, the specification and figures are to be regarded in an illustrative rather than a restrictive sense, and all such modifications are intended to be included within the scope of present invention. The benefits, advantages, solutions to problems, and any element(s) that may cause any benefit, advantage, or solution to occur or become more pronounced are not to be construed as a critical, required, or essential features or elements of any or all the claims.

As used herein, the terms "comprises," "comprising," or any other variation thereof, are intended to cover a non-exclusive inclusion, such that a process, method, article, or apparatus that comprises a list of elements does not include only those elements but may include other elements not expressly listed or inherent to such process, method, article, or apparatus.

What I claim as my invention is: